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SECURITY INFORMATION

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. 25X1

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

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SUBJECT The Bakish (Georgi Dimitrov) and other Rubber Factories

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 25X1

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1. The Bakish rubber factory, now known as the Georgi Dimitrov factory, which employed approximately 500 workers, was situated at Voenna Rampa, a suburb of Sofia. This factory was the largest of its kind in Bulgaria, and, unlike all other rubber factories, belonged to the Heavy Industry Department of the Ministry of Industry.[1]

2. All the tires available in Bulgaria, including those for the army, were produced in the Bakish factory, except for a small number of imported tires of special sizes. No rubber products were exported and very few were imported. The total number of motor vehicles, including army vehicles, was 15,000.

3. Approximate daily production during 1950 was:

   a. 4,000 pairs rubber shoes and galoshes;

   b. 7,000 pairs rubber soles;

   c. 100 technical articles and rubber coverings for rollers (part of the year only);

   d. 150 bicycle tires;

   e. 150 inner tubes; and

   f. 150 automobile tires, the majority of which were 32/6, for Opel-Blitz; the largest were 975/20 and the smallest were 16/5.25.

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4. The machinery dated from 1930-38 and was made by Hermann Bersdorf, Hanover, Germany. There were six vertical presses. Two Frances Shaw presses were imported from Great Britain in 1950; each of these had a capacity of 18 tires a day. There was a complete set of equipment for rubber reclamation, including replastification.

5. The following is a list of raw materials used:

   a. Smoked sheets: 600 tons a year, imported from the USSR but actually of Far East origin;

   b. Synthetic rubber: 400 tons a year, from the USSR;

   c. Reclaimed rubber: 300-400 kilograms daily;

   d. Valves for tires: formerly imported from the United States, later produced by the military factory at Kazanluk; and

   e. Cord: 100 tons Egyptian cotton (maco) a year; an experiment was once made with cotton from the USSR, but the cord showed 25 percent less resistence to strain than the Egyptian cotton.

6. There had been no production of synthetic rubber since the war, 25X1 [redacted] not know of any planned for the near future. Experiments were under way to grow kok-sagyz (sic), a plant which collects a rubber substance in its roots and seems to grow well in a climate such as that of Bulgaria. The method of extraction used by the Bulgarians was washing the roots with gasoline, which produced a material containing resin and other substances but not rubber for commercial purposes. [redacted] the USSR 25X1 extracts the rubber with the aid of caustic soda, claiming a result of 200 kilograms per hectare, of which eight to 10 percent is pure rubber. No kok-sagyz was imported from the USSR.

7. The chemicals used by the Bakish factory were:

   a. Mercapto and D. P. G. (Diphenylguanidin): accelerators both supplied by the USSR; approximately 1.5 percent by weight was required;

   b. Neozono "D": an anti-oxidizer, which required 1.5 percent by weight, was supplied by the USSR;

   c. Sulphur: requiring 3 percent by weight, was imported from Italy;

   d. Zinc-white: 100 tons a year, imported from Poland; and

   e. Soot: 200 tons a year, imported from the United States.

25X1 8. [redacted] the following persons were connected with the Bakish factory:

a. Kostov, a former director of the Union of Rubber Factories, an active Party member and a former worker;

b. Mandil, superseded Kostov; and

c. Kiril Rekovski, about 29 years old, a Party member and engineering student, was the technical manager of the plant.

25X1 9. [redacted] about 5,000 workers were employed in the rubber industry in Bulgaria. There were 22 rubber manufacturing plants besides the Bakish, all of which were nationalized and belonged to the Light Industry Department of the Ministry of Industry. A central rubber reclaiming factory was to be built in 1950 in an unknown location.

10. A laboratory, built early in 1949 at the former Shipka rubber factory in the Hadji Dimitu sector of Sofia:

a. Examined raw materials;

b. Checked finished products;

c. Perfected production methods; and

d. Advised the Rubber Factories Union of the Ministry of Light Industry to which it was responsible, in all matters pertaining to development of the industry.

The laboratory's staff consisted of five chemical engineers and six assistants. It had no fixed budget and depended for funds upon the Rubber Factories Union. There was no exchange of technical information among the Eastern European countries.

25X1 11. [redacted]